



# *The Lemonier Express*

## *March - April 2004*

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## Message From the Commander

Happy Easter! I have always found it interesting that no matter where I am deployed, the special days of the year are still special. God has been very good to us this year here in the Horn of Africa and we are grateful to him for our continued safety and successes. Easter is a good time for all of us to re-focus on what life is all about and where our priorities are. Yes, the hard work of your loved ones is reaping big dividends out here, but we would be remiss not to give credit to a risen King for His protection and provisions. The story of Christ's resurrection is the same in Djibouti as in Montana...and that is a comforting thought.

Easter also signals it is time to rip another month off the calendar and put in the circular file. Another holiday come and gone...and time moves on. The only thing missing out here is the "April showers brings May flowers" aspect. Though we are technically in the "rainy season", this morning is the first time we have awakened to the beautiful sound of rain on our tent roofs. Beautiful may sound like an odd description, but given our last rain was three months ago it was a refreshing sound. It is still over cast and has drizzled off and on all morning. Of course the bad news is this means mud everywhere and a hot steamy climate as soon as the sun comes back out. Oh well, cool rain is nice while it lasts. It rains all around us in Ethiopia, Kenya, and even further inland here in Djibouti...just not here. Of course, even if it does rain I do not believe we will see May flowers. But before you start feeling sorry for us, we are at least enjoying the 4-season climate out here – mud, hot, hotter, and unbearable. Life is full of brief and fleeting pleasures, and we like you are learning to take what we get and find the good in it.

Since my last newsletter, we have joined our RED HORSE Engineer Detachment, a new Marine C-130 Detachment, Kilo Company 3/2, and many terrific individual augments. I am constantly amazed at how strong of a team we enjoy out here in spite of the frequent turnover of personnel and units. It is a great tribute to the talent of the great men and women who are out here. It is also a great tribute to your love, support, and encouragement. I have learned over the years that behind every motivated and dedicated soldier, sailor, airman, Marine, and civilian are supportive family and friends. Your contribution is not small and should not be taken lightly. You can always tell which young warrior just received a care package from home or has just heard those precious words we so long to hear – "We love you and are behind you...hurry home." The smile tells all! Thank you for your support and sacrifice.

In the words of Thomas Pane (one of our Founding Fathers): "If there must be trouble, let it be in my day that my children may have peace." You and your loved ones are modern day Patriots who have chosen to sacrifice rather than forfeit freedom. We are having a significant impact out here in winning back the neighborhoods from the terrorists who would seek to move in and enflame the passions of an impoverished people. We are winning and you should be proud. Hang tough and keep your eye on our President's objective – to free the world of terrorist tyranny. Thank you for your continued support and prayers. Keep the home fires burning and God bless you.

Sincerely,

Mastin M. Robeson  
Brigadier General, US Marine Corps  
Commander, CJTF-HOA



### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

#### CJTF-HOA Info

- 1(866)360-3775
- 1(910)451-2222

#### American Red Cross

- 1(877)272-7337

#### TriCare Appointment/Advice

- 1(800)931-9501

#### CJTF-HOA Family Readiness Officer, Djibouti, Africa

- Lt. Kevin S. Barnett - USN

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#### Family Readiness Officer, Camp Lejeune, NC

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